

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Systems and methods are described for personal video recorders (PVRs) and other devices configured for recording and playing back media content from a data storage unit, preferably a random access unit such as a hard drive. A system is described having network connectivity, such as a power-line communications, with other PVRs or similar units, wherein media content can be automatically shifted from one unit to another over the network, such as in response to changes in available storage space. Content transfers and deletions within the system being intelligently performed based on content status, user preference settings, and user preference information such as received from a preference engine, toward optimizing the value to the user of the content which is retained network wide. An additional aspect provides content restoration after mistaken deletion by the user or automated deletion functions.